

## COLLABORATION

### **a) Describe activities in the ongoing process of coordination and collaboration efforts conducted across entire spectrum of child and family service delivery system**

#### Outreach efforts

The CD is active in education and outreach activities through various forums. The division makes every effort to ensure that contact with the public, elected officials and consumers helps to educate them about the child welfare system.

For the last two years, division leadership has encouraged its circuit managers to initiate contacts with their legislators. The CD wants to ensure that legislators know who their local managers are and feel comfortable contacting them with questions – regarding both legislative issues and constituent inquiries.

In addition, the CD Director testifies annually to the General Assembly about the positive outcomes achieved by the division's programs. This often occurs during the legislative budgeting process.

CD staff at the local level interacts regularly with their community members in a number of forums. In addition, the media across the state are an excellent conduit for informing the public about the work of the division. The department's Communications Office regularly asks the division for positive stories to share with the media. In addition, the division and department issue news releases on positive initiatives like the Missouri Heart Gallery, Foster Care Month and Adoption Month. These same initiatives are touted in public access radio and television programs in the state's metro areas. The CD participates in these programs about four times each year.

These initiatives and other events often provide opportunities for the division to share outcome data with the public. The division receives numerous requests from the media each year for child welfare data. This provides a chance to showcase successes.

#### Public/Private Partnership for Case Management Services

The Division director and other key staff from the CD meet with the CEO's of the contracted case management agencies and their program managers every other month. This meeting previously occurred one time per month and it was decided by all parties that monthly meeting were no longer necessary. This forum has been and continues to be utilized to resolve issues which pose a barrier to the successful implementation of the public-private partnership. An example of an issue that was addressed early is generalized complaints from community stakeholders regarding adoption services. While the provision of adoption services was optional in previous case management contracts, it is a mandatory component of the current contracts. The CD responded to the concern by making an offer for contracted staff to shadow state agency adoption

specialists. In addition, some of the contractors decided to hire their own adoption specialists.

The every other month CEO meetings have also been utilized to examine the support contractors receive from CD contracted case management oversight specialists at the local level. Each county assigning cases to the contractors has designated staff to oversee the contracts and provide technical support to the contracted staff. It was decided that a CQI process would be implemented at the local and regional levels where meetings occur on a monthly basis. This type of process emphasizes issue resolution at the local level and ongoing planning for improved service delivery and collaboration.

The Division director and CD staff met individually with each contracted provider to discuss lessons learned from the first year of the contract, specifically any strategies they utilized to achieve outcomes and any barriers they were still experiencing. Information from these meetings will be reported back in an aggregate format, to help strengthen the range of existing services.

#### Community Quality Assurance Committee – April 2007

The membership of the CQAC consists of professionals from child welfare or related disciplines to encompass a broad spectrum of professions so as to create a multi-disciplinary perspective within Jackson County.

During the past year, two subcommittees within the CQAC have continued to meet and work on projects identified by the team members.

- Congregate Care Pilot Project – This will focus on treatment for children ages thirteen and under in a residential treatment facility; specifically how to move them more quickly to a lesser restrictive placement setting.
- Education Subcommittee – This group meets to discuss education issues regarding children in foster care. The group is working to bring an educational collaboration program to the Jackson County area that will involve cross-training staff from the CD, resource providers, Guardian Ad-Litem's, and local educators on the needs of foster and adoptive children while in the school setting.

#### State Technical Assistance Team

Our collaborating partners through the Department of Social Services, the State Technical Assistance Team (STAT) assists in child abuse/neglect, child sexual abuse, child exploitation and pornography, child fatality, and other child-related investigations at the request of the department, law enforcement, or other child protection agencies.

STAT is responsible for managing the Missouri's Child Fatality Review Program (CFRP), including training and support for the 115 county-based, multidisciplinary CFRP panels, as well as collecting data to identify trends, patterns and spikes in the number of child deaths to facilitate the development of prevention strategies.

STAT is supervised by the Director of the DSS and available 24-hours a day to respond to requests for assistance. STAT's investigative responsibilities are considerably different than those of the CD. During 2006, STAT investigated 178 cases, which was

up from 152 cases in 2005. Of those, almost 75 percent are sexual abuse or exploitation related. Because of the tremendous growth of consumer availability to inexpensive, high-tech electronic imaging equipment, there has been a significant growth in the number of “cross over” cases (sexual abuse cases that also involve cameras, computers and other digital media). These complex cases require an ever-increasing amount of time and resources. STAT reports 186 felony charges were filed by prosecutors.

This multidisciplinary approach has proven to be a key link in the investigation and evaluation of child fatalities, which ultimately leads to meaningful prevention strategies.

### State Youth Advisory Board

In FY 2007 the strategic goals of the SYAB consisted of developing a peer-to-peer network, advocating for car insurance and driver’s license for foster care youth, promoting Medicaid extension for youth no longer in care, ages 18-21, and hosting a youth and adult conference. The SYAB also wanted to be involved in training workers in the new Adolescent FST Guide and Individualized Action Plan and help to increase Native American SYAB membership.

Unfortunately, none of the goals of the SYAB were met in FY 2007. They are still striving to meet these goals, but for most, it will take longer than one year for SYAB to see these goals to fruition.

The SYAB continue to discuss and develop a concept behind how they would like a peer mentoring network to look. There has been discussion of involvement of foster care alumni to help make this happen.

The SYAB members drafted a letter about the need for foster youth to have car insurance and their idea of a group policy for foster youth. They are now currently working on developing a relationship with one of the major insurance carriers in Missouri to have a corporate partner/sponsor of this idea. This relationship is being developed through a SYAB member’s employment.

Every year the SYAB attends Child Advocacy Day. This is a day that youth advocates have a chance to talk with their state legislators about issues important to youth. For the past couple of years the SYAB members make it a point to specifically discuss Medicaid extension for youth no longer in care, ages 18-21. This year there has been legislation proposed that provides Medicaid for foster care youth between the ages of 18 to 21.

The youth and adult conference was not able to be held this year; however the SYAB have been very active in participating in speaking engagements and workgroups to promote foster care youth needs. SYAB members have presented at the Court Appointed Special Advocates state conference, the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association state conference, and the Federal Region 7 IL Coordinators’ Meeting. Also individual SYAB members have been active on various workgroups, including the Quality Assurance in Psychological/Clinical Services for Kids Advisory Committee and

the Department of Mental Health Advisory Board. The SYAB has had individual members that have been participating at the national level in an internship in Washington D.C., through the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) and with the FosterClub All-Stars. The SYAB plans to continue this national involvement as another SYAB has just been selected to participate in summer 2007 OFA Internship in Washington D.C., and the selection of a new FosterClub All-Star is to be announced by May 1, 2007.

As the training for the Older Youth Program for case managers has not begun yet, the SYAB members have not had a chance to participate. However training is planned to begin May 2007 and SYAB members will be participating in the training when it is given in their region. It is the plan for SYAB members to help in the presentation of this training, to infuse the youth perspective.

The intent to increase Native American membership on the SYAB has not occurred in FY 2007. This is mainly due to the changes within the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. During this year we have discontinued the role of the Independent Living Specialists which has temporarily disrupted local area youth advisory boards which help to generate membership to the State Youth Advisory Board. Although CD central office staff has had conversations with representatives from the Indian Centers about this interest in SYAB membership, we have not been able to get the logistical variables figured out. With the advent of the Older Youth Program and contracted Chafee service providers, the CD and the SYAB still intend to recruit Native American youth for SYAB membership in FY 2008, at that point in time the ability to recruit and transport at the local level will be more effective.

#### PIP Advisory Committee

The PIP Advisory Committee has consisted of approximately 13 active members throughout the year. There are representatives from various public/private partnerships including a youth and foster parent, Department of Mental Health, Division of Medical Services, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of State Courts Administrator, Court Appointed Special Advocates, UMC- School of Social Work, Heart of America Indian Center, PBC contractors – Cornerstones of Care and Catholic Services for Children, Children's Trust Fund and CD. In addition, a representative from the Administration for Children and Families is a regular participant.

This advisory group met on a quarterly basis and continues to assist the CD with identifying areas of improvement in policy enhancements, practice and data outcomes. The work of the Advisory group included but was not limited to identifying practice implications related to data, provided input in increasing placement stability for foster children, improving services to older youth and improving foster parent recruitment and retention. All members of the committee received a copy of the 2007 Annual Progress and Services Report for review and input.

**b) Update the State's description of substantial, ongoing and meaningful collaboration between the State child welfare agency and the courts in the development of the APSR and any CFSR or Title IV-E program improvement plans**

Multidisciplinary Training

OSCA awarded local multi-disciplinary training grants to 12 circuits in November, 2006. This training is to address local issues. The training is to be provided to juvenile court and state agency staff. CD provided funding for OSCA to arrange for training in the following areas: court room skills, collaboration training, and roles and responsibilities. CD has discontinued their funding. OSCA will continue to fund the court room skills training and collaboration training through their court improvement grant.

- Six court rooms skills training sessions have been provided from November 2006-April, 2007 in Kansas City, St. Louis, Springfield and Kirksville. This training is open to juvenile court and state agency staff. However, the majority of the training participants are CD staff.
- Collaboration training was scheduled for February 2007 for 5 circuits. This was cancelled due to inclement weather. The training was rescheduled for May, 2007 but only three circuits could attend. Circuits brought their local team, which included juvenile court and state agency staff, to the three day training. This training was geared toward improving the collaboration among team members to resolve local issues and ultimately improve outcomes for children in out-of-home placements.

Four circuits received training on the Dependency Caseflow Management in October 2006. Circuits brought their team which included their juvenile judge, juvenile court staff, and CD staff. In addition some circuits brought attorneys, guardian ad litem, court appointed special advocates, and circuit clerks. This training placed an emphasis on collaboration at the local level to resolve issues and is focused on improving outcomes through data collection. Training dates for 2007 has been scheduled for September 18-20<sup>th</sup>.

Five multi disciplinary regional trainings on sibling bonding and placements are scheduled for July 2007.

Five regional trainings on issues related to older youth are being planned for the fall 2007. This training will be provided to judges, other juvenile court staff, guardian ad litem and court appointed special advocates. CD is planning to train their staff this summer with regards to changes in their older youth program, special needs of this population and available services. Information from this training will be incorporated in the training arranged by OSCA.

Fostering Court Improvement Project

The division and QA staff have been engaging and collaborating with the courts through Juvenile Court Improvement Project (JCIP) and the Fostering Court Improvement (FCI) initiative.

In October 2006, the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA) and CD kicked off the FCI initiative. Initially involving only four circuits (13<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>), FCI combines the use of existing AFCARS data and training on caseload management into a comprehensive circuit specific collaboration between the court and CD staff. Using the AFCARS system as a platform, the court has the unprecedented benefit of access to court performance measures. This allows the court and the division to track performance on common measures thereby enabling improved outcomes for children by addressing areas in need of improvement.

FCI teams in the initial sites continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss outcomes and to develop strategies for improvement where needed. FCI is scheduled to expand to an additional four to five sites in 2007. Caseload management training is scheduled for September 18-20, 2007. Three circuits have confirmed they will attend the training. Two additional circuits have been approached but not yet committed.

#### Juvenile Court Improvement Project

Missouri's JCIP strategic plan requires legal and judicial participation in the CFSR process, a mandate that was addressed on three fronts this year. First, through a contract between the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA) and the CD, multidisciplinary training required by the PIP was provided. Second, courts were advised of the specific areas for improvement involving judges and other juvenile court staff that were contained in the PIP. All were encouraged to support and participate in the reform efforts. Finally, staff from the OSCA agreed to serve on the PIP Advisory Committee, a multidisciplinary group whose purpose is to identify strategies for improving outcomes in child welfare cases.

The contract between OSCA and CD no longer exists. OSCA now funds the training through the court improvement grants.

In addition to the joint trainings and state level collaboratives, local CD offices and courts work together on a daily basis on making key decisions for children and their families. The responsibilities include decisions and determinations ranging from whether child abuse or neglect actually occurred, to whether the parent(s)' rights should be terminated, and whether a child should be adopted or placed in another permanent setting.

CD has staff out-based within Family Courts. For instance, Jackson County has five employees and one supervisor based at the Jackson County Family Court (JCFC) in the Drug Court unit. Out basing staff at JCFC has shown to be highly effective in serving our client population. Members of the treatment team are on hand and readily available to clients and CD staff. The team approach to case management has been highly successful. The use of this approach in case management promotes the ideology where one philosophical agency allegiance is not too strong in the direction of either justice or treatment. The team approach supports objectivity and independence that incorporates both justice and treatment priorities, while supporting the client through the requirements established by both systems.

## **C) Healthy Marriages, Fatherhood, Youth Development, Rural, Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.**

### Healthy Marriage and Families Grant

The CD, in collaboration with the Forest Institute, has been providing training opportunities to CD staff and community partners through the Healthy Marriage and Families Grant Initiative. The modules provide an array of training related to family systems on topics including:

- Fragile Families and Environmental Issues
- Healthy Marriage and Your Community
- Domestic Violence in Intimate Relationships
- Handling the Challenge of Infidelity
- Substance Abuse and Intimate Relationships
- Premarital and marital Education
- Relationship Education for Singles
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Stepfamily Dynamics and Supporting Programs
- Promoting Father Involvement
- Marriage and Family Concerns for Immigrants

As of this date in SFY07, a total of 33 sessions have been conducted for a total of 198 participants. These modules will continue to be offered in SFY 08 and will become part of the CD Training in-service course offerings on a regular basis once the grant period is done.

- Setting of the training activity - Contracted facility (i.e. hotel);
- Duration category of training activity - part - time (section 235.61);
- Provider of the training – Forest Institute and CD Professional Development and Training;
- Approximate number of days /hours of the training per session – 1 ½ hours per module;
- Audience to receive the training - CD staff ,community partners;
- Description of the estimated total cost - approx. \$4,000 per year. (Grant funding utilized to cover majority of training related expenses);
- Federal Title IV-E funding is allowable as one of the funding sources for this training and would be distributed based upon our Cost Allocation Plan and the results of the Random Moment Time Study. The following activities are addressed in this training.
  - Referral to services;
  - Development of the case plan; and
  - Case management and supervision

### Fathers for Life – Incarcerated Fathers Collaboration Project

The FSD was awarded implementation funding effective July 1, 2005 for this Inactivate. Five sites are currently participating in the Fathers for Life Project. Two sites joined the project more than a year ago as Tier I sites. Tier I sites include the Missouri Valley Community Action Agency and the Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation.

These sites are now actively recruiting fathers and providing project interventions. In the last 12 months, three additional sites joined the project as Tier II sites. These sites include the Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph, East Missouri Action Agency and Grace Hill Settlement House. Tier II sites have just begun participant recruitment and expect to begin offering interventions in upcoming months.

### Interventions

Fathers who choose to participate in this project have the opportunity to benefit from a wide variety of project interventions. Interventions are currently being offered in Tier I sites and are expected to be available in Tier II sites in upcoming months. Interventions include:

- 24/7 Dad-The *24/7 Dad* program is a 12-week parent education series developed by the National Fatherhood Initiative. The *24/7 Dad* program focuses on the skills that every dad needs. In these sessions dads learn about themselves and how important they are to their children.
- Focus on Fathering-Parents as Teachers Group Classes specifically designed for fathers are another exciting parent education opportunity. Parents as Teachers parent educators will offer Focus on Fathering workshops in participating sites on topics ranging from discipline to co-parenting.
- Parents as Teachers Individual Parent Coaching-Parents as Teachers Individual Parent Coaching which is typically delivered through local school districts and at the parent's home is being offered voluntarily to identified fathers who live in the community and are under the supervision of the Division of Probation and Parole. Traditionally, Parents as Teachers educators have focused on delivery of services to the mothers of young children, but for this project, have specifically targeted fathers. Parents as Teachers educators throughout the state are being encouraged by the Parents as Teachers National Center to accept referrals from this population.
- Parenting Apart Classes- The Parenting Apart Workshop is a 3-hour parent education session designed for parents who do not currently share the same household. In participating sites, parents have the opportunity to participate in this workshop in an effort to build a more cooperative parenting relationship.
- Enhanced Employment Services-The Division of Workforce Development is committed to developing innovative ways of working with employers and ex-offenders in an effort to more efficiently and successfully match individuals with jobs. The Division is committed to providing supports and resources to fathers in state correctional facilities and as they re-enter the community.
- Mediation-Mediation services are available to mothers and fathers who wish to resolve issues about co-parenting. Mediation services for this project are provided statewide by M.A.R.C.H., Inc. (Mediation Achieving Results for Children).

### Positive Youth Development

The CD is not involved in a federally funded Positive Youth Development (PYD) Initiative. However, the CD has taken a PYD approach to developing services for children and youth. The Older Youth Workgroup convened in October 2005 made recommendations in February 2007 to create an older youth program that is financially

responsible, accountable and sustainable and meets the needs of the youth. Please refer to the 2006 APSR for specific recommendations.

The CD through revision to the Older Youth Program (OYP), as recommended by the Older Youth Workgroup has incorporated the National Resource Center for Youth Services' Four Core Principles (youth development, collaboration, cultural competence, permanent connections) within the staff training. One of the four core principles is Positive Youth Development (PYD); which is being integrated into the OYP Training. This training will be provided to all CD Family Centered Out-of-Home Care staff during summer and fall of 2007.

The OYP Training was initially introduced through a test project that began in October 2006 and concluded in April 2007. The test project sites included both rural and metro circuits, the 15<sup>th</sup> – Lafayette & Saline counties, the 22<sup>nd</sup> – St. Louis City, the 25<sup>th</sup> – Phelps, Pulaski, Texas & Maries counties. Family Centered Out-of-Home Care staff in each of these circuits attended a three day training which included information on PYD, older youth permanency needs, Strengths-Needs Assessment, Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA), Older Youth Transition Action Teams, and the Adolescent FST Guide & Individualized Action Plan.

One day was spent specifically focusing on PYD and older youth permanency needs. Activities and discussion included how to appropriately and adequately engage youth in case planning through youth-driven FST Meetings. State Youth Advisory Board (SYAB) members have already been trained on how to facilitate their own FST and there were discussions on how SYAB members could be utilized in 2007 as trainer to train their peers, once they have completed the "train-the-trainer" OYP training.

At the end of the OYP test project, on April 12, 2007, an evaluation meeting was held with youth, case managers and supervisors invited to share their thoughts and concerns with the program. Case managers provided the following feedback on the training:

- Strengths-Needs assessment provides an opportunity for the worker to work more closely with and getting to know the youth better.
- Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment was being completed by foster parents and other placement providers but they were completing the paper version rather than the web-version, which can be scored electronically. The scores and responses reflect a youth's strengths as well as areas for growth. This information can be very useful in goal planning and in starting discussions about life skills strengths and directions.
- Adolescent FST Guide & Individualized Action Plan was well received as a way to engage youth in a positive manner to specifically address issues related to their needs.

All three sites expressed some concerns of the process of the Older Youth Transition Action Teams (OYTAT) including;

- Redundancy of the work of the FST and the Older Youth Transition Action teams.
- Circuits having problems generating enough participants to serve on a FST and OYTAT.
- Workers may not be able to carry out the recommendations made by the OYTAT.

- Will community members that develop personal connections with youth require a background check?

Knowledge gained from the evaluation meeting participants will lead to revisions to the program and policy, occurring prior to offering training statewide.

The OYP Training will be offered to all CD staff, PBC for case management services, Chafee contracted providers and the State Youth Advisory Board. Foster parents may be offered the training and will be presented with an overview of the Older Youth Program. This training will also be held in conjunction with training offered by the Office of the State Court Administrator (OSCA). Court personnel, which include judges, juvenile officers and guardian ad litem will be provided with this training. The OSCA training is tentatively scheduled to begin in fall 2007.

#### Faith Based Collaborative

Particular emphasis is placed on the need for the adoption of “special needs” children. In September of 2005 the CD sponsored a state-wide faith based conference with 200 individuals attending. This conference was aimed at strengthening and building relationships with local faith communities in an effort to support Missouri families. As a result of this conference, mini conferences were held in Springfield, St. Louis and Kansas City during 2006. The CD has seen many examples of the collaboration that has been formed as a result of this effort from faith partners working with families to prevent abuse and neglect to support of foster and adoptive families in their congregations and communities. In September of 2007 a second state-wide conference will be held to keep the momentum going in this partnership.

#### Rural Collaborative

*Building Healthy Families (BHF) (Formerly the Chronic Neglect Pilot Project)*

In 2006 the pilot counties of Jasper, Newton and McDonald Counties changed the name of the pilot from Chronic Neglect to *Building Healthy Families (BHF)*. The name change is more family-friendly, descriptive, and marketable to potential community partners. The primary goal for this pilot is to protect children from harm, prevent further abuse/neglect, and reduce the risks to their safety or well-being. The success of BHF program efforts will be measured by the ability of the family, state agency, and community to protect children from harm.

Family-centered BHF services are intended to achieve safety for children by strengthening family and child functioning. These goals are better met by keeping families intact. When decisions need to be made to remove a child from the home, the BHF case manager will facilitate this decision-making process in a timely and respectful manner that supports the best interest of the child. The division will be looking at the number of children removed from the home during the first three months, the first 6 months and the first 12 months following the BHF initial intervention.

McDonald and Newton Counties began screening families for the BHF pilot on September 11, 2006, and accepted the first case on September 20, 2006. Jasper County screened the first case on November 20, 2006 and accepted the first BHF case on November 27, 2006. There were 29 families screen total in all of the pilot sites and 12 accepted for BHF case management. One family accepted into BHF case management, transferred to another county. Of the 12 families accepted, four were opened from a family assessment, six from an investigation and two were opened as a result of a newborn crisis assessment. Fifty percent of the families accepted in to BHF had abuse allegations in the initiating hotline and 67 percent had allegations of neglect. Thirty-three percent of BHF families had some history of a newborn crisis assessment. BHF families averaged seven prior child abuse/neglect reports per family in comparison to an average of 4.2 priors from families not accepted into the program.

From the time of initial implementation there have been five subsequent hotlines. Only one of these were from families involved in BHF case management. Of the 29 families, three families had children removed from the home during this time. None of those families were involved in the BHF case management.

Bolstering family empowerment is a key element to improving and sustaining healthy family functioning. Families need to feel that they have the strength, capability and resources available to meet every obstacle that comes their way. A Family Self Assessment will provide a good measure of how the family rates their own capabilities, family functioning and perceived available resources. The Division will be looking at how the family rates themselves after 30 days of the intervention and after 60 days of the intervention on the families perception of 1) relationship with community 2) problem solving 3) relationships and support from family and friends 3) sense of accomplishment and task completion 4) parenting and parent child relationships.

Newton and McDonald Counties report a donation of food by a community organization for the purposes of this BHF program and anticipate being able to continue this monthly. Early Head Start has donated cleaning supplies. Another community partner donated bug spray. A new community doctor participated in a staffing of one of his clients. He was very supportive of our program and intends to promote it. Another community source donated a storage unit. There has also been excitement and support from the school systems as well. Jasper County also reports strong buy in from the school system, who have been active in making referrals and requests to staff families.

### Community Partnerships

Missouri's Community Partnerships continues to lead the effort under the direction of the Family and Community Trust (FACT) Board, formerly known as The Family Investment Trust. This private-public board guides the work of the twenty-one non-profit organizations around the state.

The FACT Board of Directors serves as the policy body for the work of Missouri's Community Partnerships. The Board enjoys full membership: eight public sector members and nine private sector members. They come together as a Board four times each calendar year. The Family and Community Trust was named a finalist in the 2006

Innovations in Government Award and was awarded \$10,000.00 for their efforts in developing The Promising Practices Network.

In the past few years the Community Partnerships appropriation has consistently been reduced and our partnerships have been called upon to do more with less each year. At the conclusion of 2006 the Community Partnerships are leveraged on average \$9.49 for every dollar they receive and had generated a total of 203,207 volunteer hours in their communities around the state.

Each September, each Partnership reports on various strategies they have or are working on to improve conditions for children and families. These results are assembled into a Community Results Reports and are published on the web at [www.mofact.org](http://www.mofact.org). The Community Result Reports are also shared with the Missouri General Assembly.